

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (original) A method for managing telephone, comprising:
 - calling a contact;
 - presenting the contact with a predetermined out-calling dialog;
 - translating the contact's vocal responses to the dialog into textual words using selected interactive voice response algorithms;
 - connecting the contact to a human operator after a predetermined portion of the out-calling dialog with the contact is completed; and
 - providing the operator with the textual words.
2. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein calling includes:
 - selecting the contact from a set of contacts within a contact database.
3. (original) The method of claim 1 further comprising:
 - classifying the contact as either a person or not a person; and
 - terminating the call, if the contact is not a person.
4. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein presenting includes:
 - selecting the dialog from a set of dialogs stored in a dialog database based upon a set of attributes associated with the contact.
5. (original) The method of claim 1:
 - further comprising,
 - storing the contact's vocal responses, textual words, and contact attributes in a contact database; and
 - wherein providing includes,
 - providing the operator with access to the contact database.
6. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein connecting includes:

continuing a next portion of the out-calling dialog with the contact while waiting for the human operator to become available.

7. (original) The method of claim 1:

further comprising,

determining whether the contact is interested in the out-calling dialog;

and

wherein connecting includes,

connecting the contact to the operator, if the contact is interested.

8. (original) The method of claim 7, wherein determining includes:

applying a set of heuristics to the textual words.

9. (original) The method of claim 7, wherein determining includes:

matching the textual words with predetermined keywords associated with interest.

10. (original) The method of claim 7, wherein determining includes:

matching the textual words with predetermined keywords associated with disinterest.

11. (original) The method of claim 7, wherein determining includes:

applying a set of heuristics to the textual words; and

concluding that the contact is interested if a greater number of the heuristics within the set of heuristics indicate the contact's interest.

12. (original) The method of claim 7, wherein determining includes:

applying a set of heuristics to the textual words;

associating a score with each heuristic;

totaling the scores; and

concluding that the contact is interest if the total score is above a predetermined threshold.

13. (original) The method of claim 7, further comprising:
terminating the call with the contact, if the contact is not interested.

14. (original) The method of claim 7, further comprising:
performing the translating and determining elements in parallel.

15. (original) The method of claim 7, further comprising:
performing the determining element after the predetermined portion of the out-calling dialog with the contact is completed.

16. (original) A method for managing telephone calls, comprising:
calling a contact;
presenting the contact with a predetermined out-calling dialog;
translating the contact's vocal responses to the dialog into textual words using selected interactive voice response algorithms;
connecting the contact to a human operator after a predetermined portion of the out-calling dialog with the contact is completed;
providing the operator with the textual words;
storing the contact's vocal responses, textual words, and contact attributes in a contact database;
wherein providing includes, providing the operator with access to the contact database;
determining whether the contact is interested in the out-calling dialog;
wherein connecting includes, connecting the contact to the operator, if the contact is interested; and
terminating the call with the contact, if the contact is not interested.

17. (currently amended) A medium having instructions encoded thereon for enabling a processor to perform the operations of computer program code stored for commanding a computer to manage telephone calls, comprising:

calling a contact;
presenting the contact with a predetermined out-calling dialog;
translating the contact's vocal responses to the dialog into textual words using selected interactive voice response algorithms;
connecting the contact to a human operator after a predetermined portion of the out-calling dialog with the contact is completed; and
providing the operator with the textual words.

18. (original) The medium of claim 17:

further comprising,
storing the contact's vocal responses, textual words, and contact attributes in a contact database; and
wherein providing includes,
providing the operator with access to the contact database.

19. (original) The medium of claim 17 wherein connecting includes:

continuing a next portion of the out-calling dialog with the contact while waiting for the human operator to become available.

20. (original) The medium of claim 17:

further comprising,
determining whether the contact is interested in the out-calling dialog;
and
wherein connecting includes,
connecting the contact to the operator, if the contact is interested.

21. (original) A system for managing telephone calls, comprising a:

means for calling a contact;
means for presenting the contact with a predetermined out-calling dialog;
means for translating the contact's vocal responses to the dialog into textual words using selected interactive voice response algorithms;
means for connecting the contact to a human operator after a predetermined portion of the out-calling dialog with the contact is completed; and
means for providing the operator with the textual words.

22. (original) The system of claim 21, further comprising:

means for storing the contact's vocal responses, textual words, and contact attributes in a contact database.

23. (original) The system of claim 21, further comprising:

means for determining whether the contact is interested in the out-calling dialog.

24. (original) A system for managing telephone calls between an operator and a contact, comprising:

a contact database for storing information on the contact;
a dialog database containing a predetermined out-calling dialog;
a call manager for calling the contact and presenting the contact with the dialog;
and
an interactive voice response module for translating the contact's vocal responses to the dialog into textual words and storing the words in the contact database which are accessible to the operator.

25. (original) The system of claim 24, wherein the contact database includes:

a set of attributes associated with the contact.